

NOTE ON THE BREEDING OF THE GLOSSY IBIS, *FALCINELLUS IGNEUS* (*IBIS FALCINELLUS*, LINN.).

BY K. H. BENNETT, F.L.S.

As I have never heard of an instance of this bird breeding here before, nor seen a description of its nest or eggs, perhaps a short account may be of interest to my ornithological fellow members.

I will premise my remarks by stating that the present year in this part of the country (Lower Lachlan) has been an unprecedentedly wet one, surpassing in this respect the far-famed 1870. In consequence of this unusual rainfall large bodies of water have collected, exceeding anything previously seen by white men; and this doubtless has been the cause of the present bird, as well as several other aquatic species, breeding here this year that I had not known to do so previously; whilst birds that I had never seen here before,—though they did not breed—were amongst the visitants.

Some years ago I described in the Proceedings of the Society the breeding place of *Platalea flavipes*, Gould, and *Ardea pacifica*, Lath., which is situated in a large depression on the plain, and, for the greater part of its extent thickly overgrown with "Box" (*Eucalyptus*) trees, a few miles from Yandembah Station. In consequence of the great rainfall of the past few months, this hollow is now full of water reaching up to the lower branches of many of the trees, in fact quite a lake.

Wishing to obtain some spoonbill and herons' eggs I visited this place on the 22nd of October, and swam into the part of the hollow where the heronry is situated. Whilst swimming about I noticed a glossy ibis fly off a nest on the branch of a tree some eight or ten feet above the water, but having no idea that this bird bred here, I did not take much notice of the circumstance thinking that

the bird was merely perched there ; but I remarked that the nest appeared recently constructed, and differed entirely from the scores of nests of many species of birds surrounding me. After obtaining a number of spoonbills' and other eggs I was returning to land, and in doing so again passed the same tree, and the ibis again flew off the nest. This aroused my interest, and I at once swam to and ascended the tree, and found that the nest contained one egg of a beautiful greenish-blue colour, somewhat resembling that of *Ardea nove-hollandiae*, but much brighter ; this egg I took but unfortunately broke it whilst returning to land. The nest was placed in an upright three-pronged fork of a small tree, and was entirely composed of branches of box (*Eucalyptus*) leaves, built up to about a foot in height, slightly hollowed on the top, and without any lining beyond the leaves of which it was composed.

Thinking it probable that I might find other nests of this bird in this large and secluded swamp or lake, I again visited it on the 2nd of the present month (November), and when swimming up to the tree from which I had taken the egg on my previous visit, I saw the ibis to my surprise and gratification again fly off the nest, which on examination contained three beautiful eggs. A further search amongst the thickly growing trees resulted in the discovery of another nest which also contained three eggs, but these were so very much larger than the previous ones that had I not seen the bird on and fly off the nest, I should have considered them as belonging to some other species ; but there is no possible doubt as to their identity, for, owing to incubation having begun, the bird was very reluctant to leave the nest, and let me approach almost to arm's length before she did so. This nest was exactly similar to the preceding one in material and structure, and placed in a similar position.